

ABSTRACT

An apparatus and method for discharging sheets from a starwheel assembly and creating stacks of a desired number of sheets without interrupting the rotation of the starwheel assembly. The present invention separates sheets such that one separated sheet completes a stack and the other separated sheet is supported by a separator to begin a new stack. The completed stack is preferably transported away from the starwheel assembly by a conveyor as the new stack supports additional sheets that are discharged from the starwheel assembly. The new stack will preferably move away from the starwheel assembly to provide clearance for the accumulation of additionally discharged sheets. The apparatus can allow for cyclical repetition of the separation of sheets, the stacking of sheets, and the transportation of stacks such that continual rotation of the starwheel assembly is not interrupted.

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